

RICE AIN'T NICE

Is Boyd Rice Culturally Sensitive? Does Your Mother Suck Cock in Bus Stations?

It's a name that sounds as American as breakfast flakes. It evokes tableaux of young Protestant men in shiny Easter suits. I'm reminded of apple-bobbing contests, moonlit hayrides, and pink slices of ham wedged in mayo-slathered Wonder Bread. I see swizzle sticks swirling iced tea in tall, thin glasses as a family sits beneath patio lamps, admiring a prom gown. It's a perfect name for a next-door neighbor in a fifties sitcom—Ward Cleaver, meet Boyd Rice.

The man fits the name—white-bread features, an easy laugh, and

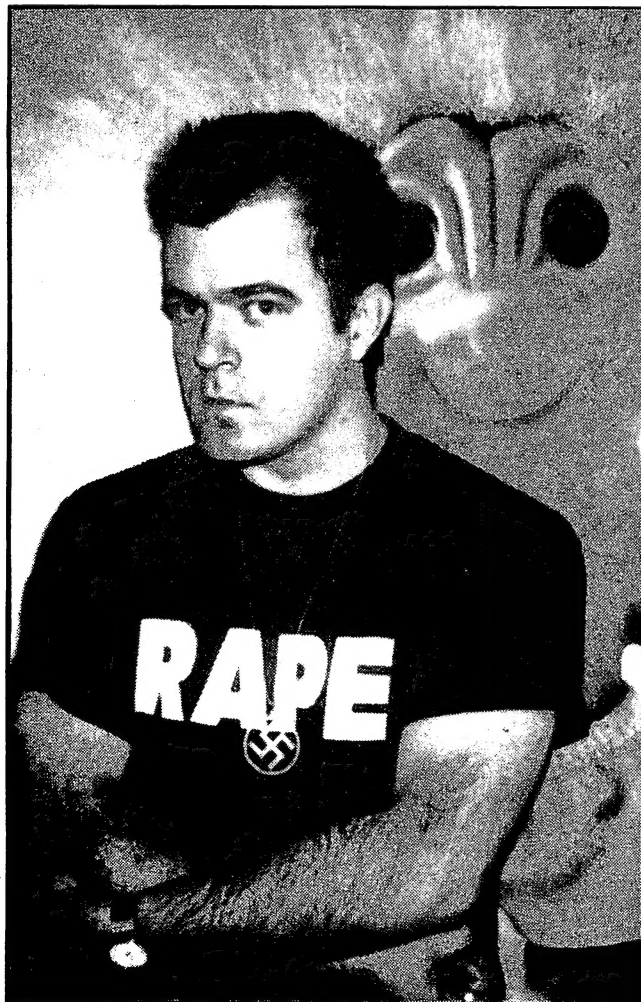


PHOTO BY GEOFF PALTON

Rap-music fan Boyd grudgingly endures a T-shirt designer's embarrassing typo.

liberal use of terms such as "okey-doke." He's fond of cats. He likes girl groups. Disneyland's his favorite place. Such a nice guy. "I'm one of the nicest men you'll probably ever meet," he told radio witch hunter Bob Larson.

Aye, but Boyd's a hard one to figure, a tough nut to crack, a difficult Rice to fry. Larson, for one, wasn't swayed by his protestations of niceness: "This is sick, man!" he shrieked. "You're really scary.... You are Satan."

So who is Boyd Rice, the world-renowned musician, publisher, philosopher, and recreational bowler? Well, as the migraine-inducing musical unit Non, he porked the bloody womb that hatched modern industrial music. In later works such as *Music*, *Martinis*, and *Misanthropy*, his calm vocals floated over wintry dirges, muttering eschatological Rod McKuenisms about AK-47s and society's need for a "brutal gardener." That steady, unaccented voice has also spoken in favor of war, murder, AIDS, and starvation—anything which prunes earth's bulbous masses. "All that humankind thinks is great and mighty," he wrote in *Apocalypse Culture*, "is but a disease upon life and must be made to perish if life is to continue."

It's that brutal-gardener rap which pissed off the open-minded folk of San Francisco, a city which he abandoned for the pristine, glacial, Alpine—well, *Caucasian*—climes of Denver, Colorado. Under the big, blue skies, Boyd helms the Abraxas Foundation, which he describes as a "social Darwinist think tank." The Foundation's publishing arm is a virulent tabloid called *WAKE*. With articles such as "Long Live Death!" and "Nature's Eternal Fascism," *WAKE* peddles the astringent tenets of Friedrich Nietzsche, Gustave Le Bon, and the ever-cuddly Ragnar Redbeard. It exalts the blood mysticism and warrior spirit which characterized pre-Christian Europe.

According to Boyd, the gnostic deity Abraxas represents the confluence of good and evil, creation and destruction, positive and negative, *der yin und das yang*. From all appearances, Abraxas has incarnated itself in the icily enigmatic Mr. Rice, who's a deft fusion of mild manners and ill will. He's Goofus and Gallant as Siamese twins; the student-council president who's secretly slaying all the cheerleaders; nearly presidential, albeit in the antichrist mode.

But 'fascist' is a word as ghastly to the left as 'communist' used to be for the right. It's a blanket condemnation which freezes out any hope for constructive discourse. A prominent countercultural journal known for its strident politicking went so far as to slander Herr Rice with the 'N' word. Say it ain't so, Boyd. Still the bleeding hearts. Renounce the jackboots and brownshirts. Come back home.

Troubled that someone who seems as wholesome as a steaming mug of

cocoa could swallow such universally reviled concepts, we decided to administer him a cultural-sensitivity quiz, a word-association test designed to gauge whether Boyd's within the fold of proper political thought. We fed him *nice* words, *sweet* words—the verbal equivalent of inkblot butterflies—and he spat back a wasp's nest. Perhaps he is, as his detractors fear, a Rocky Mountain Mussolini.

HUMANITY: "Nature's weakest species of animal, yet one which wields the most force. A breed whose instincts have been displaced by intellect and whose intellect is totally devoid of intelligence. A *mass* of contradictions."

TRUTH: "A meaningless label that each person attaches to the variety of falsehood they find most attractive."

DEMOCRACY: "In theory: mob rule. In practice: economic totalitarianism. The dictatorship of the dollar."

LOVE: "Love is one of those words whose meaning is seen as absolute and universal, yet there are more varieties of love than there are different factions of Christianity. As most people define it, I'd say it's lust diluted with sentimentality. I have nothing against lust or sentimentality per se, but they aren't a particularly winning combination."

HARMONY: "Everyone seeks it, yet few (if any) find it, because they don't know what the word means. They seem to think it means peace or the absence of conflict, but nowhere in organic life will you find the absence of conflict. True harmony lies in the ability to both recognize this conflict and embrace it."

INDIVIDUALITY: "Unfortunately for the champions of individuality, man is for the most part a social animal. A lone individual couldn't manufacture a modern pencil, let alone anything requiring more specialized skills or knowledge. Nine out of ten humans are most comfortable in the herd, which is where they belong."

HAPPINESS: "What you have when you know what you want and how to get it."

FAMILY: "Like Keith, Laurie, Shirley, Danny, Chris, and Tracy—the Partridges."

JUSTICE: "The perfection that occurs when people are not protected from the byproduct of their own folly, when they aren't punished for their wisdom and rewarded for their stupidity."

PEACE: "A rare state which has only existed when a despot has been fearsome or strong enough to impose it. The image of your head on the end of a stick is a strong incentive toward 'visualizing world peace.'"

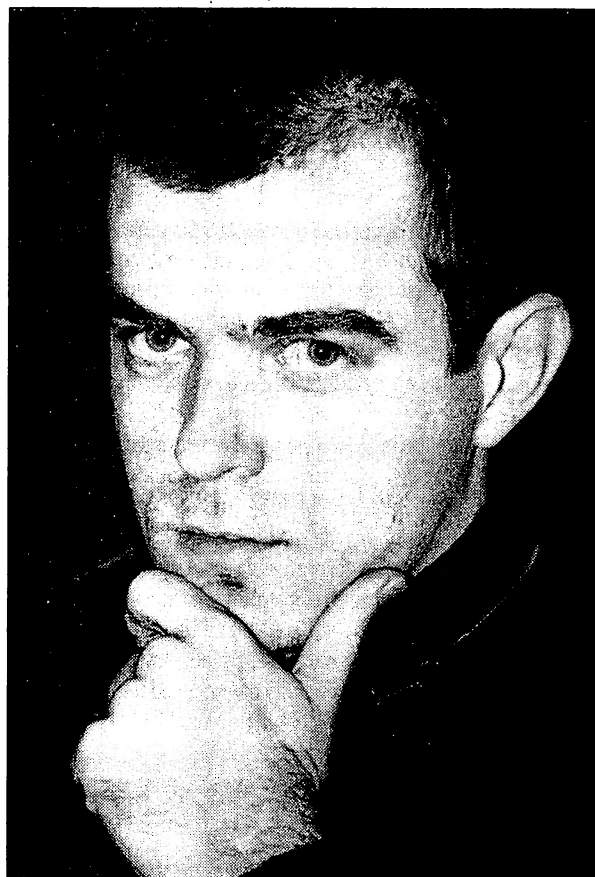
LIBERAL HUMANIST: "One who fanatically follows Christian ideals and dogma yet doesn't believe in Christ."

ANARCHIST: "A liberal humanist in a leather jacket."

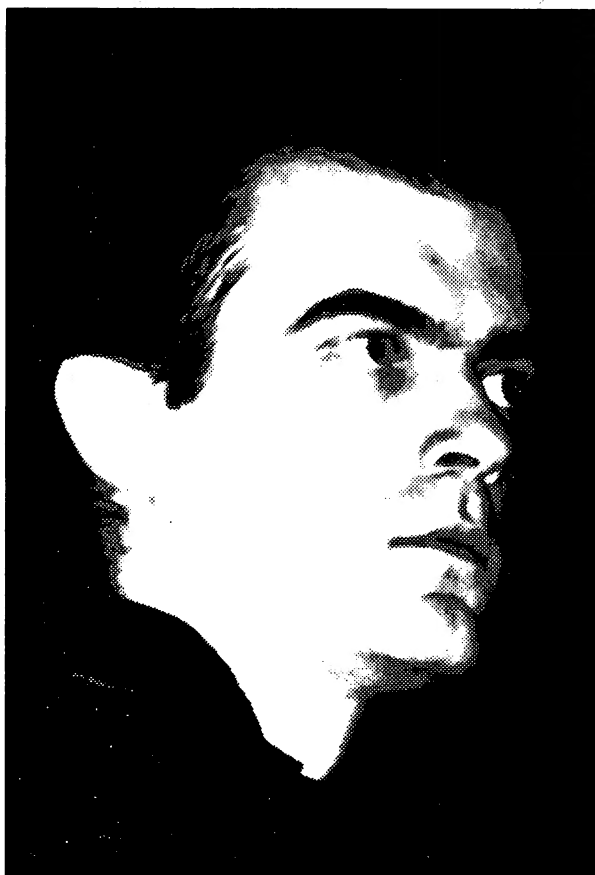
POLITICS: "Line from an old low-budget sci-fi movie: 'Politics is for people who can't run their own lives.'"

RIGHTS: "A figment of the fertile imagination of man. They have to be created by legislation and enforced by punitive 'laws,' since they exist purely outside the realm of reality. In the final analysis, you have only the rights you take or make—all else is simply wishful thinking."

EQUALITY: "I have no idea what is meant by this word, since I've never once seen any substantive example of it. Is a strong man equal to a weak man? An intelligent man equal to a congenital idiot? An ugly person equal to a beautiful one? If so, then what exactly is meant by 'equal?' If it makes other people happy to imagine that fifty pounds of lead is equal to fifty pounds of gold, then that's their choice. Personally, I just don't see it." ■



Boyd wonders whether he has enough time to get some fries and a shake before the world ends.



PHOTOS BY NICK BOUGAS

Madame Tussaud's short-lived Boyd Rice wax figurine.